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Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4683rd meeting

Monday, 30 December 2002, 12.05 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Valdivieso	(Colombia)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Raytchev
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	China	Mr. Chen Xu
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Guinea	Mr. Boubacar Diallo
	Ireland	Mr. Deady
	Mauritius	Mr. Jingree
	Mexico	Mr. Rodríguez Zahar
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

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02-75959 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 12.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2002/1397, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Bulgaria, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I should to draw attention to the following changes to Annex A of the draft resolution. Page 3, item (4) should read "1.A.4.d: Quantities of activated carbon, that have been tested and certified effective for chemical weapons agent absorption, that exceed the established consumption rates". On page 5, item (10) should read as follows: "1.2.14: Hantaviruses; 1.2.53: Lumpy Skin Disease virus".

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution, as orally revised in its provisional form. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Colombia, France, Guinea, Ireland, Mauritius, Mexico, Norway, Singapore, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There were 13 votes in favour, none against and 2 abstentions. The draft resolution, as orally revised in its provisional form, has been adopted as resolution 1454 (2002).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Russia has always considered the United Nations humanitarian programme in Iraq an opportunity to satisfy the basic needs of that country's civilian population with the assistance of the international community. Given the continuing trade embargo, it is the only way to solve Iraq's humanitarian problems. We hope that, as the relevant Security Council resolutions are implemented with the full cooperation of the Iraqi side, a prospect will open for the suspension and then the lifting of sanctions. That moment has not yet come, and therefore the uninterrupted delivery of major humanitarian goods to Iraq is of vital importance.

The resolution just adopted by the Security Council provides for the introduction of a number of adjustments in the way in which humanitarian deliveries to Iraq are carried out, pertaining to the Goods Review List and procedures for its application. Russia was unable to support the draft resolution and thus abstained from voting. We note that, in the course of the consultations that preceded today's vote, the draft resolution's text became more balanced. In particular, it now includes an important observation that, in future, review of the List will cover not only additions of new elements but also deletions of entries. We hope that the Office of the Iraq Programme, the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency, taking the experience of resolution 1409 (2002) fully into account, will make recommendations with regard to corrections to the List and procedures with a view to facilitating the flow of humanitarian goods to Iraq.

It is of key importance that the resolution provides for the possible lifting of sanctions. However, the consultations that were held did not enable us to take various views — including proposals by the Russian Federation — fully into account. We believe that some wording in the List imposes too many restrictions and affects not only dual-use goods but also goods that are exclusively civilian in nature. We should especially like to recall that we believe the limitations on trucking and transport vehicles to be unjustifiably harsh, as such vehicles are necessary for ensuring normal civilian transportation.

In that context, we are seriously concerned at information that came recently to the Secretariat that, in the Security Council Committee established pursuant

to resolution 661 (1990) concerning the situation between Iraq and Kuwait, virtually all requests made by Iraq for truck transport and for trucking equipment have been blocked. This trend has a very negative impact on the possibility of full distribution of humanitarian goods to the Iraqi population and is further complicating an already difficult situation in such important sectors of the economy as water supply, electric power, irrigation and oil refining.

However, we decided not to object to the adoption of the resolution, based on the fact that the Goods Review List is not a denial list, but only one that provides for the adoption in the sanctions Committee of well-considered and valid — and this includes from the humanitarian standpoint — decisions on specific contracts. We trust that in future all the members of the sanctions Committee will take a constructive approach in considering such requests. Our view of future work and of the improvement of the Goods Review List and procedures will, to a significant extent, depend on the effectiveness of the activities of the sanctions Committees in approving humanitarian and other types of civilian goods.

Mr. Wehbe (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Syrian Arab Republic delegation abstained in the voting on resolution 1454 (2002), just adopted by the Council. Here, we would like to make a number of points. First, when voting in favour of resolution 1447 (2002) calling for the extension of the oil-for-food programme, Syria took into account the need to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people and the need to meet its needs, especially basic humanitarian needs. Syria feels that Iraq's cooperation with the United Nations weapons inspectors and its positive approach to resolution 1441 (2002) should inevitably lead to the lifting of the sanctions imposed on that country and not to the sanctions regime being complicated by the addition of further restrictions under the pretext that certain goods can be of dual use.

Secondly, the haste of the negotiations which led to a vote on the draft resolution did not allow Syria enough time to study the Goods Review List, considering the complex technical nature of these goods, the examination of which requires a high level of technical expertise and adequate time. Therefore, Syria was unable to vote in favour of the draft resolution. We could not fully examine its implications so as to ensure that it would not have an adverse impact on the interests of the Iraqi population.

Mr. Duclos (France) (*spoke in French*): In adopting resolution 1447 (2002) on 4 December, the Security Council committed itself to doing everything possible to review the contents of the Goods Review List, as well as the procedures for its implementation within 30 days. Today the Council has achieved this.

To our way of thinking, more time could have been provided for negotiation so that the Council would have been able to speak in unity. We also have questions, to say the least, regarding the method by which this negotiation was conducted, or, at least, begun.

However, France voted in favour of the draft resolution, because in substance it respects the fundamental objective of the Goods Review List: to alleviate the suffering and to improve the humanitarian situation of the Iraqi population, while avoiding the import by Iraq of dual-use goods. We also note that the resolution provides that the Goods Review List and the procedures for its implementation can be reviewed very soon and at regular intervals.

For our part, we retain the option of making use of that opportunity in order to advance, as far as may seem desirable, the deletion of items and the easing of the procedures.

Mr. Chen Xu (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation is in favour of adjustments to the Goods Review List and the relevant procedures with a view to improving the humanitarian situation in Iraq. In this spirit, we took part in the consultations on the draft resolution and proposed a number of amendments. We note that China's amendments have basically been reflected in the text. The text in general is quite balanced, and that is why China voted in favour of the draft resolution.

We have also noted the positions of other members. We, too, believe that if there had been time for further exchanges of views among members, it would have been possible to achieve a better result. What must be pointed out is that the current Goods Review List and procedures are not perfect. They need to benefit from the common experience we have gained through our practice. We hope that, in our future periodic reviews, the Goods Review List and procedures will be further adjusted and improved so as to better meet the humanitarian needs of Iraq and to ensure normal economic exchanges and trade between Iraq and other countries.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Before I adjourn this meeting, which we all hope will be the last of the year, I should like once again to thank all my colleagues from each and every delegation, and, most especially, to express our gratitude to the entire Secretariat team for the support they have provided over the last two years and, in particular, during the past month. Likewise, I would express our appreciation to all the interpreters, who, I am sure, have been put to the test by those of us who have, perhaps, given them somewhat more work in this important task.

Finally, let me wish everyone very happy holidays and my very best wishes for the year 2003.

There are no further speakers on my list.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.